

俺のペットは聖女さま

My pet is a holy girl



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My Pet is a Holy Maiden

Arc 5

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Chapter 71 – Reunion

The sound of a door opening and closing was heard; Calcedonia's face lit up. And then, she rushed to the front door in a hurry.

Her eyes reached the entrance and were cast on the person she had expected to be there.

"Welcome home, husband!!"

"Yeah. I'm back, Calsey."

Tatsumi smiled and tightly hugged his wife who had come running over.

"Sorry. The trial was unsuccessful."

Settling down in the living room, Tatsumi told the results of the trial to Calcedonia while drinking the tea she had brewed.

"Is that so....."

As it had been predicted, it seems that Tatsumi and the others had failed to hunt the spotted lynx.

This outcome itself could be guessed beforehand, and so Calcedonia didn't feel disappointed despite knowing that Tatsumi had failed.

However, Calcedonia furrowed her brows and tilted her head.

"Hey, demonic monsters are amazing. Being able to hunt that kind of demonic monsters; you and the other senior demonic monster hunters are really amazing."

Tatsumi spoke with a smile.

He looked like the usual Tatsumi on the surface. But, to Calcedonia—to Tatsumi's wife, it was immediately apparent that he was wearing a mask.

That's why.

That's why Calcedonia got up from her chair and approached Tatsumi, and just like that, she hugged him.

Tatsumi's face got buried right between Calcedonia's soft breasts.

"Huh...?"

"Don't do impossible things, okay?"

Tatsumi's body stiffened unexpectedly at the voice tinged with sadness that was coming from above as he drowned in Calcedonia's soft breasts rich in elasticity that could be best described as a boing boing.

"I knew that you would..... no, husband would fail the trial this time. So you don't have to force yourself to laugh."

The reason Tatsumi had forced himself to smile was, of course, to not let Calcedonia worry.

However, Tatsumi's poor act was easily seen through by his wife.

"I myself have experienced this, so that's why...I understand the fear my husband felt."

Tatsumi's body shivered in Calcedonia's embrace. Inside his heart, the fear of confronting the spotted lynx came back to him.

"Isn't it fine? Even if you don't become an exorcist. I have said this before as well, if it's husband...no, no matter how many children we have between us, I will support all of us."

Calcedonia's face was not visible to Tatsumi, but he was sure she was making a smile of kindness that her name Holy Maiden would suggest.

Also, the smile of that Holy Maiden was directed solely towards her husband.

Tatsumi's heart shook violently at the fear felt from the demonic monster and the sweet whisperings of his wife.

Calcedonia's words were equal to "the Devil's whisperings" to Tatsumi right now whose confidence as a demonic monster hunter, and objective of becoming an exorcist was crumbling around him.

Wouldn't it be good to follow her words just like this?

It was her own decision to call me to this world in the first place. Then, doing as she said would not mean I am bad.

Such backwards thoughts sprung up in Tatsumi's heart several times.

Following her words, he could live while depending on her for support, and enjoying this soft body of hers to his heart's content.

Even in that kind of life she would surely say she's happy. She would surely say she's content just to live together with Tatsumi.

Tatsumi's heat that was swaying in indecisiveness began slowly leaning towards the sweet invitation that had been extended to him.

Suddenly, Tatsumi's hand grabbed Calcedonia's chest and started rubbing it gently.

"Hyo-hyoe!!?"

Suddenly, Calcedonia pushed Tatsumi away reflexively and brought up both of her hands to cover her chest.

Stunned, she looked at Tatsumi and found him with the expression of a child who had succeeded in a prank.

"You shouldn't do this, Chiiko. Don't spoil me so much."

"H-Husband.....?"

"Because if a beautiful person like Chiiko says something like this, any man would obey without thinking. I was also about to become like one of those. But—"

The smile disappeared from Tatsumi's face and a serious expression took its place. But, there were still shadows clinging to his face.

"—I also said this before but I have no plan of becoming a gigolo."

Although the shadows were not completely dispelled, a little light was returning to Tatsumi's eyes.

His confidence had not yet returned. However, thanks to Calcedonia, it had become possible to look forwards.

In the first place, the reason Tatsumi wanted to become an exorcist was to be able to protect the woman in front of him.

Despite this, thinking about letting the woman he should protect support him was terrible.

Tatsumi recalled the fundamental reasons for his original objective and, even though it was just a little, he was able to improve his mood.

“Husband...”

Seeing the change in Tatsumi’s condition, Calcedonia also let out a soft sigh.

At the same time, she turned towards Tatsumi with a dissatisfied face.

“But...it’s a bit disappointing. With husband...t-that...everyday...I thought living a little licentiously is also...not b-bad...”

“That’s why!! Stop saying something that would corrupt a person like this!!”

Her husband retorted to Calcedonia who, with dyed cheeks, was bashfully looking up at Tatsumi as if expecting something.

Somehow Tatsumi became unable to stay at home and was walking down the streets of Levantes which were stained red in the evening.

Why was he unable to stay at home? The reason for that was his beloved wife.

Tatsumi had regained some of his confidence. Nonetheless, there was still a long way before he decided to face that demonic monster again. In his mind, he was at a loss at what to do from now on.

Calcedonia had turned her eyes full of a certain kind of expectation towards Tatsumi when he was like this.

They had just officially been married and, on top of that, Tatsumi had left the house for a few days to hunt for the spotted lynx.

Naturally, it wasn’t unreasonable for Calcedonia to have some “expectations” to Tatsumi who had returned home.

But, that was not the case with Tatsumi.

A liaison with Calcedonia would certainly make him forget the bad things, even if it was for just a moment.

It would be a very happy and enjoyable time for Tatsumi to entwine his body with her soft and warm one.

However, he was not in the mood to lay with his wife while his heart was in a

depressed condition.

He felt it wasn't right to sleep with her with this feeling.

Did she not notice her husband's feelings, or did she tempt him even while noticing his feelings? His wife's gaze had been hot and wet.

It had seemed that if they stayed like that he would end up embracing her, so Tatsumi had stepped out to cool his head.

Tatsumi had left despite feeling Calcedonia's regretful gaze graze his back.

However, he didn't have any particular purpose for stepping out. That's why he was walking around aimlessly in the evening streets.

Should I go to a bar and get some drinks before heading home?

While he was considering this, a boar-drawn carriage pulled by an orc passed besides him.

There was the carcass of a demonic monster resembling a huge wolf on the luggage rack. It looked like a demonic monster hunter was in the middle of moving the spoils he had killed somewhere.

A man who looked to be in his twenties was sitting on the driver's seat. There was no one else riding on the carriage besides him; this man had probably taken down the wolf like demonic monster by himself.

The wolf like demonic monster appeared to be a demonic monster that was certainly a higher level than the spotted lynx. From the point of Tatsumi right now, it was unbelievable that he had hunted such a demonic monster by himself.

Thinking that just what kind of person can hunt this monster alone, Tatsumi turned his attention towards the driver's seat.

"Hmmm...?"

Red hair trimmed short and rust coloured eyes. And above all, Tatsumi recognised that good looking, refreshing appearance.

Also, the man on the driver's seat also turned to look at Tatsumi as if he had heard the voice that had just spilled from Tatsumi's mouth.

The man slightly opened his eyes. Then a friendly smile immediately surfaced on his face, "Tatsumi...? Is it you, Tatsumi?"

"M-Morga...?"

This person was Morganeich Tychors, a Freedom Knight that had also worked as an exorcist in partnership with Calcedonia and was a former Templar of the Savaiv Church.

Tatsumi and Morganeich clinked the wooden wine cups they were holding in their hands together.

The small clinking sound was swallowed by the dominating clamour of the bar and disappeared in the air.

Morganeich had invited Tatsumi to the bar he was going to, and Tatsumi had responded affirmatively.

Also, the bar Tatsumi was brought to was similar to the Elf's Resthouse in which demonic monster hunters would frequent it.

Morganeich had left the carriage in front of the shop, he had talked with the shop owner and after entrusting the carriage to him, had returned to Tatsumi's side.

And, occupying one of the tables, they did a toast with each other's cups.

"It's been a long time. Has it been...a year?" Tatsumi started.

Morganeich replied, "That's right. Even though we live in the same time, we haven't really seen each other."

"This town is pretty big, that's why."

"Well, in my case, I'm often away to hunt demonic monsters."

The two laughed and did another toast.

"That's right. It's a bit late but congratulations. You got married to Calcedonia, right. I was away from this town during the New Year's Festival, but I heard it over the grapevine."

"Thank you."

"By the way, are you alone today? Where's Calsey? According to the rumours,

I heard that you guys were always together.”

“Uh, umm..... T-That..... hahaha.”

There was no way Tatsumi could say “My new wife was looking at me bewitchingly so I left the house.”

Thanks to that, what kind of rumours would float around about him and Calcedonia. That thought made Tatsumi feel depressed.

“Could it be, you guys had a quarrel right after the marriage?”

“N-No, that’s not the case...”

Morganeich realized something was up from Tatsumi’s bad tone of words.

“What is it? It must be fate that we met here again. If there is something troubling you, I can at least hear you out, right? You already know this, but I’m a former priest.”

While taking a sip of wine, Morganeich made the offer in a broken note of voice.

Certainly, both Tatsumi and Morganeich had once crossed blades with each other. However, that was caused by a Devil; it wasn’t like they hated each other.

Looking at it from Morganeich’s point of view, Tatsumi was a person who had snatched his beloved from his side, but it had already been a year since then. The current him could completely divulge towards both Tatsumi and Calcedonia.

So, it was also a kindness that Morganeich came out with Tatsumi like this.

From Tatsumi’s view, Morganeich was a senior demonic beast-hunter and an exorcist. He didn’t think it was a bad thing to consult with his senior on his worries.

And it was a thing that even if he couldn’t say it to Calcedonia, he could say it to his senior of the same sex.

How could he tell his beloved wife that the fear he felt from the spotted lynx was too great, and that he was still feeling scared. Even Tatsumi had his pride as

a man.

Coming to this decision, Tatsumi slowly told Morganeich about the failed encounter with the spotted lynx.

Chapter 72 – The True Objective of the Test

“I see...a spotted lynx...”

After he finished listening to him, Morganeich looked at Tatsumi again.

“For you to be able to challenge the spotted lynx...you’ve gone a long way.”

“N-No, that...I’m still way beneath you...”

Certainly, in this year, Tatsumi has been training hard. However, his strength couldn’t even compare to the Freedom Knight in front of him. It’s not as if Morganeich was fooling around in the time that Tatsumi was training.

“Speaking of which, you’ve fought the spotted lynx too, haven’t you?”

“Yeah. I fought that demonic monster before.”

“Then... did you beat it on your first try?”

“I was crushed utterly on my first try too... No, it isn’t just us. Most beast-hunters lost on their first try.”

Before the time that he was recognized as a full-fledged beast-hunter, Morganeich had done the same test.

Similarly to Tatsumi’s party, Morganeich, along with Calcedonia who he had already at that time, challenged the spotted lynx, yet completely couldn’t do anything.

The two of them fell into a slump, just like Tatsumi right now, as one would expect.

“But, the next time... I won.”

It was only two words that Morganeich said, “I won.” Yet, those two words were overflowing with confidence.

“H-How in the world... How did you beat that demonic monster!!?”

Tatsumi subconsciously leaned forwards as he asked that question. To such a visibly excited person, Morganeich stifled his smile and looked at him seriously.

Morganeich entirely understood Tatsumi’s feelings. Tatsumi was still fixated

on finding a way to beat the monster. It's no wonder that he's all over the place.

Surely, his seniors had the same feelings towards his past self as he is having now towards Tatsumi.

Thinking that, he unintentionally let out a smile. Of course, he was smiling about his past self and not Tatsumi.

"Don't panic, Tatsumi. In all honesty, there's a small 'tradition' among senior beast-hunters. When doing the trial, other beast-hunters can't offer their help."

It wasn't known who made it, but it was an unspoken rule among the senior beast-hunters.

He continued, "It's like a rite of passage, you know? No matter where you go, you'll never get any real advice."

"B-But..."

Discouragement was clear on Tatsumi's face.

If he were to hear of how Morganeich won over the spotted lynx, it'd be a breach of etiquette, wouldn't it?

In this world, you couldn't just simply google to find an answer.

Without the internet, it was a complicated task to get relevant info.

For example, the books of this world were all handwritten, and because of that, they were expensive valuables, so ordinary people couldn't simply come into contact with them.

The only places that had a large collection of them would be the royal palace, various churches, and archives of major clans.

On that point, Tatsumi, as a priest of the Savaiv church, could get into its library.

However, the collection was so large and varied that if Tatsumi wanted to find information of the spotted lynx, it'd take too long as to be worth the effort.

Furthermore, it wasn't even certain that the information existed in there to start off with.

And since books are a dead end, one had to ask other people.

In this case, it would have to be a person who has hunted the spotted lynx before, like Morganeich. So, when Tatsumi asks such a person, he'd learn how to fight the spotted lynx and use the information on the next battle with the monster.

But, like Morganeich said, senior beast-hunters would not give any advice on fighting the spotted lynx. Consequently, there wasn't a huge chance that the information was in the Church of Savaiv's archives.

Tatsumi was looking downcast. And to such a Tatsumi, Morganeich was grinning.

At that time, Tatsumi felt that something was off.

The tradition of seniors not helping juniors with the spotted lynx made sense.

However, would it really be possible that so many beast-hunters could pass by following that tradition?

Of course, there are those people who just kill the lynx outright. But, from what Tatsumi's been hearing, most beast-hunters lost on their first encounter.

If so.

If so, the test isn't just about hunting the spotted lynx.

There seemed to be something more to the test.

Tatsumi looked at Morganeich in doubt. And then, he smiled.

Seeing the look on Morganeich's face, he was confident of his assumption.

Tatsumi remembered of the words that Morganeich said some time ago.

"Morga. Can I ask you a small question?"

"Hm. What is it?"

"You said it before, didn't you? 'When doing the trial, other beast-hunters can't offer their help.' So, in other words, if I ask for help..."

In short, seniors won't do anything if you don't say anything, but if you ask a question, can't they answer it? That was what Tatsumi was thinking.

"My, my? Did I say something like that?"

His mouth was denying it, but his eyes were smiling.

Yes. Tatsumi was correct.

Morganeich's silence was Tatsumi's answer.

"It seems like you've already figured it out, but the trial of the spotted lynx is more than just being able to kill it."

Morganeich re-explained the trial to Tatsumi, who had already had an idea of the truth.

"In this trial, it is essential to collect enough information about the spotted lynx."

"And for the young beast-hunters that don't know defeat, the trial teaches them a lesson. The higher you are, the harder you fall."

The readiness of fighting a demonic monster for the first time. The importance of intelligence gathering. And most importantly, overconfidence and self-conceit.

It is these things that the trial aims to cover.

Tatsumi was overconfident.

Though their party was small, they never met with defeat. You couldn't say they had no conceit in themselves.

And, they were met with the misleading words of "If you can do this, you'll be a real beast-hunter." Which led them to fight the demonic monster without the help of information and be completely defeated.

The trial went exactly as it was intended to.

"Besides, just by being a beast-hunter doesn't mean that they're friends with every other one. We beast-hunters have a loose relationship, and when someone fails a hunt, that's an opportunity for another of us."

Beast-hunters make a living off hunting demonic beasts.

That is to say, when one beast-hunter fails killing a beast, another beast-hunter has a chance at killing it instead.

For someone to kill a monster that someone else was still hunting isn't too frowned upon, but one couldn't say that it didn't break etiquette, just a little bit. However, when someone fails, nobody cares if you go hunt the same monster.

For that reason, if you don't actively ask around for information and stuff like that, most won't offer you it.

Of course, while there are those meddlesome folks who give advice if they hear that you're looking for it, there are those who don't answer even when asked.

Even so, there seemed to be a tacit understanding between demonic beast-hunters that when asked, they'd share what they knew with each other.

Tatsumi's face was glittering in hope, hearing what Morganeich has said until now.

It was the feeling of being in pure darkness only to be met with a beam of light.

But, Morganeich told the unkind truth to the hopeful Tatsumi.

"It's true that there is a custom of trading information about demonic monsters, but that doesn't mean that it's free."

"...I see. Does that mean that there's an information fee?"

"It's as you said. And, you wanted to learn from me? About the spotted lynx's habits, abilities, and weaknesses. If so, I have the right of accepting some compensation for the info."

Morganeich laughed again. Then, Tatsumi took a deep breath and asked,

"I understand. Then, how much would I have to pay for the information?"

"I guess..."

Morganeich finished the last drops in the wooden sake cup, and the server, seeing the empty vessel, refilled it.

"For the information fee, how about treating me to a drink in this place?"

"Huh? T-That's it?"

Tatsumi was stressing over how much he'd have to pay. So, when he heard Morganeich's price, he just stared blankly in surprise.

Seeing his face, Morganeich laughed like a kid who just pranked someone.

"What, did you think I was going to ask for your net worth? It's usually a drink or two and sometimes a meal. Then they'll happily give you the info. But, be careful, okay? Some people eat and drink like it's their last day in this world since they're being treated."

Tatsumi smiled at Morganeich's joke. That smile was the smile of finding the solution to a problem that plagued you for a long time.

And, the two, getting another round of sake, touched their cups together.

"I'll give ya everything you need to know to kill that beast. So you better win. And make Calsey happy!"

"Yes!!!"

Tatsumi was no longer confused or gloomy.

Several days later, Tatsumi, Jadokh, and Miloulle were once again in the forest.

They were, of course, looking for the spotted lynx. And this lynx was sprawled on the same rock like before.

The spotted lynx was staring at the intruders—Tatsumi and the others.

Last time, this was where they couldn't move. Their bodies were paralyzed from the feeling emitted from the demonic monster.

However, this time was different. Before the monster could use its glare at them, the three surrounded the lynx.

"Jadokh! Miloulle! Don't look at its eyes!"

Jadokh responded, "I know! You said that its eyes had some sort of power!"

"Fool me twice, shame on me!" Miloulle energetically said.

Tatsumi learned this information from Morganeich. The spotted lynx's eyes had a power that invoked fear in one's allies. The so-called demon eye.

It was to this demon eye that Tatsumi's company felt that abnormal fear in the last time they fought.

But, in other words, that was all there was to the spotted lynx. Yes, they had to be careful about its sharp claws and fangs, but those features weren't limited to the spotted lynx. Many other demonic beasts and monsters had the same features.

If the monster realized that its demon eyes didn't work, it would immediately escape. However, its escape route was blocked by the shield that Tatsumi was wielding.

"I'm sorry, but you can't escape!" Miloule yelled.

Miloule readied her spear and thrusted it with vigor at the beast's flank. She attacked at the exact moment the monster was confused at the blockage of its escape route.

The spear easily penetrated the skin and flesh, damaging the organs of the beast.

The lynx let out a deafening scream. Yet, despite its wounds, just that would not kill something with the mighty life force of a demonic monster.

Nonetheless, it couldn't last for much longer with its secret exposed.

Jadokh immobilized the beast with a swing of his battleaxe to its legs, and Miloule quickly stabbed it. In this way, the monster gained yet more injuries.

Though Tatsumi retreated several steps back, he was paying attention to the monster the whole time. When the beast would attempt to use the demon eyes, he'd use his shield to block its eyesight.

Like that, Tatsumi would interrupt the skill from triggering, and the two of them were left to continue damaging the monster in relative peace.

Little by little, its strength and vitality were chipped away, and before long, it could no longer stand, flopping down to the earth.

And then, Jadokh raised his axe up into the air. He dropped it down in a magnificent swing, finally dispersing the all the flames of life that the lynx had.

"Cheers!!!"

At The Elf's Resthouse, that cheerful word resounded.

The party could truly defeat the spotted lynx. This was the celebration party for passing the test.

Eru, the restaurant's workers, and the regulars gave their praises and good wishes to Jadokh and Miloulle.

Among the crowd, a drunk Miloulle was looking for Tatsumi.

"Huh? Tatsumi, where did you go?"

Miloulle was looking everywhere. But, the man was not to be found as expected.

"Geez, don't say stupid things, Miloulle. Isn't there only one place where Tatsumi could be?"

While heartily drinking his booze, Jadokh skillfully winked with his four eyes.

"Ahhh, Calsey's place, I guess... Ugh, I get his feelings, but... Couldn't he just spend a little bit more time with his companions..."

Lonely and regretful. Miloulle put those feelings of her into words.

"It can't be helped, you know? Because, to Tatsumi, Calsey is above everyone else."

"Haaaa..."

"Hey hey, if you're mad, have a drink? This is our long-awaited celebration party!"

Bang. She slammed her cup into the table in front of her. Miloulle had drank all the alcohol inside with one gulp.

"Landlady! Keep 'em coming!!! I'm gonna drink 'til the end tonight! Since I'm being treated today!!!"

Miloulle stinkily vomited like an old man. Even so, Eru poured another cup.

It was as she said, the other beast hunters were treating her today. The other beast hunters would treat those who passed the trial of the spotted lynx. That was also the beast-hunter's tradition.

"Hehehe. Then, I'll also drink without holding back. It's not like I'll be paying for it."

With a happy look, Jadokh made his request.

The other beast-hunters watched how much the two of them drank, and their faces slowly started to become more pale.

Morganeich gave out that warning to Tatsumi as a joke, but how could he know that such people were in their midst?

In the comforts of their home, Tatsumi was hugging Calsey tightly.

"...Sorry, Chiiko. Sorry for making you worry."

"No...I had no doubt that Master would win."

Nuzzling her face on Tatsumi's chest, Calcedonia happily murmured.

"Hmmm? I wonder who was the one who said that it was okay to give uuup?"

"Uh, ummm, t-that..... Geez!!! Master is so mean!!!"

Calcedonia lightly punched Tatsumi's chest a few times. Of course, she didn't put any power into them, so it didn't hurt at all.

Tatsumi gently petted the angry Calcedona's head, just like in his original world.

Calcedonia was still punching Tatsumi, but her face was of pure bliss.

"...I've somehow gotten this far, but... Someday, I'll reach your level."

"Yes. If it's Master, it'll happen before long."

It wasn't known who leaned in first, but their lips touched. When their lips parted, Calcedonia let out her pent-up breath.

Calcedonia's face was completely red. She looked lovingly at Tatsumi.

Tatsumi knew what she wanted. He picked her up and started walking.

He opened the bedroom door. After the couple entered—the door slowly closed.

Chapter 73 – Struggling

It was early morning when a loud *bang* sounded in the neighborhood.

That sound did not happen just once. It continued rhythmically for a countless period of time.

This rhythm was sometimes disrupted. It'd stop for a while, and just when you thought it finally stopped, the bangs would go even faster as if to spite you.

If the sound had to be better described, it would be the sound of wood clapping together. Except louder.

It was the sound of grueling training with a wood sword, shield, and jo.

The user of the sword was, of course, Tatsumi. And, Calcedonia was the one using the jo.

They were training in their frontyard. As it was once the house of a wealthy man, the yard was fairly spacious. There was plenty of space to practice their skills. Moreover, there was a small stable left to the side of the yard. Though there weren't any mounts being captivated there.

Although Calcedonia was a rearguard, it didn't mean that she had no skills of a vanguard. At the very least, she was miles ahead of Tatsumi.

Calcedonia swung the jo that was taller than her. It whistled through the air as Tatsumi prepared to defend against it.

Then, the tip of the jo painted a confusing picture using the space between the two as a canvas. Countless feints were made, countless skills were used, all in preparation to attack Tatsumi with his wooden sword and shield.

Tatsumi somehow read Calcedonia's intention of aiming for his legs to unbalance him. He slipped his shield to protect his legs as the jo came in.

He felt the massive crash of the heavy wood banging together from his shield. He used all the power in his lower body to brace for the impact so he wouldn't fall over.

But, Calcedonia's strike was too strong, and she was too fast. Tatsumi had no

time to react when Calcedonia readied her jo for the second time. This time she thrusted the jo like a spear, and Tatsumi tried to parry the stick of hardwood speeding at him.

He was a step too late.

The bluntness of the jo point hit his right shoulder like a train.

“Ugh!!!”

He unintentionally let out a voice of agony. Yet, he shouldered the pain in his right shoulder and smashed the shield in his left hand with all of his remaining strength.

This desperate last strike was in vain. Calcedonia had readied her jo at lightning speeds and used the jo as a prop to dance in the sky.

She used the same trick that pole-vaulters did. Of course, her approach run was almost nil and her jo wasn't nearly as long as a pole-vaulter's, so she couldn't soar that high into the air. Nevertheless, it was plenty to avoid Tatsumi's attack.

And then, while in above in the sky, she brought her jo down at the opening presented at Tatsumi's crown.

Tatsumi, feeling the attack drawing near, frantically tilted his head to dodge.

The falling jo lightly grazed his ear but smashed into his left shoulder.

Tatsumi dropped his sword in pain and fell to the ground. Calcedonia saw him in clear pain

“I-I apologize! I accidentally put in too much strength! I-I'll heal it immediately!”

After she squatted down beside the fallen Tatsumi, she started casting the aria of her healing magic without any delay. When the magic was complete, the sharp pain he was feeling had entirely vanished.

“Ah, f*ck. I can't ever beat you, can I?”

Calcedonia consoled apologetically, “No, Husband has advanced quite considerably. It's because Husband has gotten so strong that it's hard to tell

how much strength to use... Like now..."

Of course, there was no anger between them; it was just early morning training.

Tatsumi still had a zero percent chance of beating Calcedonia, but he became stronger like she said. She wasn't lying when she said it was becoming harder to tell how much strength to use.

As things stood, Tatsumi would soon surpass Calcedonia in melée combat.

"However, your school of arts... what would you call it, phantasmagoric? Seriously, it's amazing."

Back in Japan, there is a school of martial arts called "Shinto Muso-ryu." The school had a saying that described it, which was "A yari lunges, a naginata slashes, and a tachi cuts. A jo is all of these in one."

There are even more techniques involved in the jo than a sword; it was not at all worse than the sword.

Calcedonia, using healing magic on the other places hurt besides his left shoulder, stood up. When she did, she picked up the dropped sword and held it out to him.

"What shall we do? Continue training?"

"Of course. I'll show you my victory this time!"

"Yes, that's the spirit."

The two of them took their weapons and readied them. And then, a light tap of both of their weapons instead of an "on garde" preceded the vehement smashing of wood on wood.

A something was starving.

It was already an eternity since it last saw food.

The something would not extinguish from something like hunger, but satisfying its hunger was what it wanted to do above all else.

Dizzily—no, lightly, it drifted among the densely packed trees. The something was looking for food.

Days upon days. While drifting among the trees, the something was looking for an existence that could satisfy its hunger.

And then.

And then, the something had finally found it.

A huge body was lying amidst the trees. That other something was also eternally starved.

“Hunger” was a primeval desire, one of the strongest desires grounded on the instinct to survive. And to the other something boiled in that desire, the something slowly approached.

As it got closer, the something softly entered into the other something.

Just then, a violent desire attacked the something. The strong desire called hunger violently jolted it.

The something was taking the desire from the inside of the other something, bit by bit. Its hunger was becoming satisfied.

Relishing the food, food it hadn’t had in a long time, the something greedily slurped the desire.

However, the other something’s desire did not stop flowing, even with the intensity that the something devoured it. The hunger the other something held was that strong.

It that had filled its appetite after one gulp shook from the excess of happiness that it got from the endless desire.

This strong desire would make the something satiated forever. And, it would obviously encourage this desire, and collect the food, the desire, that would become more and more delicious.

Thinking that, it touched the seething hunger.

The other something’s huge body shivered. And then, its azure eyes changed to a shade of sinister red.

Moving its strong jaw, it revealed its sharp fangs.

It pushed its legs, legs that were furnished intimidating claws, against the

ground, and its large wings unfurled.

It flapped its wings, and a wave of air erupted. It was in the sky. Its thin, long tail slowly revealed itself.

Black armor covered its entire body. The giant eyes that were dyed a deep red of the thing scanned the sky for something that would satisfy its hunger.

Looking at all those *beneath* it, it found a giant among the dense forest.

It was a “giant” to humans, but to the thing, it was but a moderately large meal.

Grinding its teeth, the thing—the thing called a sky dragon in the world of men—dived down at killed the beast in one breath.

From below, Calcedonia’s jo whistled through the air before knocking Tatsumi’s wood sword up.

Tatsumi already seen this trick of Calcedonia’s a countless number of times. Next, her jo would thrust like a yari at his chest.

He put his strength into his raised arm and swung his sword down to parry Calcedonia’s attack.

Before her jo could hit his chest, the sword blocked it. His plan was a success.

Yet, this move was predicted by Calcedonia, or maybe her reflexes were just that fast. Once she nimbly pulled back the jo, she once again prepared to thrust with the jo.

Block the jo with the shield before it got enough momentum to hurt him. Tatsumi, thinking that, quickly took a step towards Calcedonia before she had enough time to lunge at him

Calcedonia’s jo could not use the full force of a thrust with the distance between them being point-blank. That kind of jo hit Tatsumi’s shield.

And, when the jo brought its power into the shield, Tatsumi skillfully slanted his shield so that the jo went off-track.

One more step forwards. Tatsumi was right in front of Calcedonia.

Her jo’s range was wider than his sword’s. So, he needed to step forwards

another time to get in range.

It might have been only a single step, a small step forwards. But to him, it was a huge leap.

However, her jo was out of position. He made the leap, and with the advantage of the sword's close range, he attacked.

Calcedonia would not just watch in awe as Tatsumi made his attack. No, without trying to reposition the jo, she used the momentum from before to swing the other end of the jo. As Tatsumi used his wood sword to make his move, her jo whistled, ripping through the air, to riposte.

Her jo was aiming for his chin. Tatsumi was entirely clear about that: his constant, grueling training with Calcedonia was not for appearance's sake.

Tatsumi's sword in his right hand had blocked the attacking jo with a loud *clack*. That's what it looked like, but somehow Tatsumi's chin received the full force of an incoming jo.

".....Huh?"

The loud clack was not the sound of the sword colliding with the jo; it was only the sound of the wood crashing into his chin. In other words, Calcedonia's jo had to have slipped through the defense of Tatsumi's sword and smashed into his chin.

Thinking that, Tatsumi looked at Calcedonia while bearing the pain.

However, the person in question was just as confused as he was. She was dumbly staring at the jo in her hands.

At the jo that had the top third cleanly cut off.

"W-What on...?" Calcedonia unintentionally let out these words of surprise.

Tatsumi looked at her jo. Right at the place where he was going to block the jo, a clean cut was made. A cut so perfect that it must have been made by a well-maintained sword.

It seemed like the cut-off part of the jo hit Tatsumi's chin with the force it got from being sliced off. It had fallen by his feet.

"Ummmm...?" Tatsumi was confused too.

"T-This is Husband's...?"

"N-No, no matter how much I try, cleanly slicing apart wood with a practice sword is really impossible...I think?"

They looked at each other for the answers, but neither of them had any.

It was at that time.

A quiet ripping sound became audible. Just when the two heard it, a run in Calcedonia's clothing became visible. The run was perfectly straight.

As the two of them were only training, they were wearing clothing that were easy to move around in but didn't have much protection to them.

Calcedonia's very ordinary clothing had a run in it. And through that run, a bit of her white skin was peeking through.

With his red face and his involuntary staring, Tatsumi clearly showed his youthfulness. Recently, he had become completely familiar with the sight—but by no means tired of it—yet it still fascinated the newlywed husband.

And then, the clothing finally gave in after the run started to grow. Calcedonia's pair of mountains boinged out into the open. Her grand tetons were exposed.

"Ahhhhhhhhh!!?"

"Oh shhhhhiiiiii!?"

The title of the most flustered did not go to the person herself, Calcedonia, but to Tatsumi.

It was their frontyard after all. Anyone could see them. Luckily for them, it was early in the morning and a scarce few would take a walk at this time, so there was nobody around to see Calcedonia's bringers of heavenly justice.

Nevertheless, Tatsumi didn't know who could be watching. He was sort of stubborn on the fact that it was only okay for him to see his wife's bare skin, so he quickly hid her chest.

With both of his palms.

To be exact, he put his hands over the front of her chest and grabbed them tightly. Of course, this wasn't a conscious action made by him. It was something done in the heat of the moment that he instantly regretted.

".....ahn."

When that "ahn" came from his wife's mouth, Tatsumi understood just what he was doing.

He was groping his wife's exposed chest.

Clearly put, this was a strange situation that he couldn't use excuses to get out of.

"Oh shhhhhhiiiiiiii!!!"

Tatsumi, once again flustered, princess carried Calcedonia back into the house with a face that asked for no arguing. Needless to say, he bolted indoors at his fastest speed.

Calcedonia's face was on full blush in Tatsumi's warm arms.

However, was it really because of the bashfulness from her chest being exposed? Or, was it from the blissfulness of being carried by her husband?

The answer was only known to the person in question.

Chapter 74 – Comeback

Tatsumi rushed into the house carrying Calcedonia. Sighing in relief, he let go of her.

Of course, while trying not to look at his wife's bare chest.

And, Calcedonia was changing her clothing. Though, she somehow looked a little disappointed.

"...In the end, what was that?"

"Well...of course it had to be...Husband's heaven magic, maybe?"

"You sure? The heaven system specializes in mobility...so I don't think it would be possible?"

The couple had finished changing and were now in the living room, talking about the earlier phenomenon and drinking tea.

Like Tatsumi said, the Heaven system mainly had spells like Instant Transition.

Among the spells that he could use, there was Mana Strike, an attack magic. He would imbue mana into his sword or fists and attack for a burst of power and an explosion.

However, in other words, he didn't need to use mana from the Heaven system. It was possible for him to use mana from any system in his attack. Just, directly using mana was rarely done, so there actually wasn't a lot of users of raw mana. There were more people using the more efficient aria magic.

The Heaven system was a mythical system, but it wasn't really as powerful as the fairy tales would say. And, Tatsumi had asked Giuseppe about it before.

In the words of his magic teacher, the Heaven system hasn't had any users of it for a long time, so there were a scarce few who could describe it well. Although, it was known that the system was much stronger facing Devils than the Holy and Light systems.

But, that saying probably evolved from the ages of holding the system of magic sacred in legends and myths.

"Because of that, I don't believe that the Heaven system can directly injure someone else," Tatsumi gave his thoughts.

Calcedonia then said, "In fairy tales, there are many cases where an offensive magic from the Heaven system appears, but they're only fairy tales...still, we don't know everything about Husband's magic, so maybe it's a new spell revealing itself?"

"Hahaha, wouldn't that be great? It'd be nice to use attack magic like you."

Certainly, Tatsumi could already use some strong magics. Even so, it's every man's fantasy to say "fireball!" and have things explode.

He continued, "Though, if the jo was really cut by Heaven system magic...I have to be more careful about using mana from now on."

Luckily, only the jo and some clothing were cut. However, if it just cut a little bit more, Calcedonia herself would have been hurt.

Tatsumi had gotten better at controlling his mana, but that didn't mean he was close to Calcedonia and Giuseppe's levels. If the earlier happening was caused by the Heaven magic system and he didn't get better at controlling his mana, a similar thing might happen as before.

Tatsumi reminded himself to keep up his vigor in practicing the sword and magic.

"To eat." That which resided in the flying dragon greatly wished to fulfill its desires.

A satiated hunger would only lead to an even larger hunger. The something which resided inside constantly enhanced the desire of hunger, so it could never feel the happiness of a full stomach.

However, the flying dragon was a very greedy monster in the first place.

Eat everything that can be eaten. The flying dragon didn't care if it ran on the ground or soared through the sky. The flying dragon didn't care if it was alive or if it was dead. The end of all those that were captured by the flying dragon was to be eaten to the very last breath.

Voracious feeding. That was the flying dragon in its purest form.

The flying dragon had just hunted a fairly large bird in the sky, and hungrily devoured the prey, still flying. With its sharp teeth and strong jaw, it could eat anything.

The possessor was delighted at the new hunger boiling up from inside the flying dragon.

More, more. That something's desire only called it for more, and it gave the flying dragon more hunger.

The flying dragon let out a deafening roar and took to the sky to search for a new prey.

The possessor smiled, feeling the new desire in the flying dragon.

But, it had to be careful. As the flying dragon fed, it must not approach the creature called a "human."

"Humans" were its natural enemies. However, the something and the something's brethren were also the natural enemy of "humans" too.

Anyhow, these "humans" had the power called magic. The something's race, a race without substance, had but one power.

There were demonic monsters that had abilities that resembled magic, but most didn't.

But, "humans" could use magic, and they had centuries of experience in fighting.

And so, no matter how strong someone in the something's race became, they would not approach the habitats of a "human."

"Humans" certainly had more desires than monsters and beasts did. However, possessing beasts didn't expose themselves to such danger.

It didn't even need to approach these "humans" to get its food.

The possessor continued to make the flying dragon hunger.

This was all to savor the desire again and again.

Tatsumi put the top part of the sliced jo on the table.

"It wasn't as if I thought we would find an answer, I guess."

"Then, shall we consult with my grandfather?"

"I guess so. That's probably the best idea."

Giuseppe, with his boundless knowledge, might know what happened, and if he didn't, he could use his connections to better figure out the answer.

Even only in name, he was a man who stood at the top of one of the four churches. In the area of information and connections, Tatsumi could not possibly have the advantage.

Tatsumi had forgotten the influence Giuseppe held in the face of his friendly old grandpa personality.

"My grandfather would know of folklore about the Heaven system, so surely he knows something."

"Come to think of it, there was a time when Giuseppe-san doing a research on the Heaven system, wasn't there?"

"Yes, I heard about that, too. Since my grandfather was a child, he was attracted to the Heaven system, and there was a time when he did a little bit of investigation here and there by himself. Though, you can call it something like youthful passion, I believe."

Remembering the tale, Calcedonia giggled.

Tatsumi, another student of Giuseppe, also heard stories from his past.

In many myths and legends, Thiet "The Grand Mage" Zamui (temp. name) made his appearance. Giuseppe studied the Heaven system to be just a little closer to his idol, Thiet.

Giuseppe had extensive knowledge about the Heaven system, and he was the patriarch of the Savaiv church, but he had that kind of past.

"Then, I will tell Giuseppe about what happened today at his next class."

"Well, let's put an end to this matter. I will prepare breakfast."

"Yep, as soon as possible, please. Since there was a training before breakfast, I'm really hungry."

Tatsumi exaggeratedly stroked his belly, and that made Calcedonia softly

laugh.

“Please wait for a little while. Today’s breakfast will be delicious.”

“Your food is never bad, you know? Every single time, my expectations haven’t been let down.”

With those words, Calcedonia smiled broadly. If you were to ask why, being praised by Tatsumi was a bliss for her.

“Then to meet my Husband’s expectation, I will go all-out.”

With acting that might have been a bit over the top, Calcedonia made a deep bow, leaving to the kitchen after.

A savory aroma started to come from the kitchen. He wouldn’t have to wait long.

Desire slowly welling up. While slurping that feeling of desire, the something got a slightly weird feeling.

A desire called “hunger” steadily welling up. That was, good. To that conclusion, it would keep inciting the flying dragon.

However, this hunger was not strange in any way.

No matter how much the flying dragon ate, even if its hunger was never-ending, there was still a limit to what a single living creature could eat. In any case, it would someday replace the feeling of hunger with that of a full stomach.

But, it did not know when to stop creating the feeling of hunger.

Desire steadily welling up. While greedily slurping that feeling of desire, the something got a feeling of confusion.

Too much. Too much desire welling up. If this continued, it would be swallowed by the desires of the flying dragon.

It feed on the desires of living creatures, but it was possible for their positions to be reversed.

When a living being’s desires were over-incited, the desires would instead consume it.

The creatures that leave the control of the something's race would merely turn into dangerous things that live only for the sake of their desires.

A *thing* that was neither a demonic monster nor a demonic beast.

While greedily slurping the steadily overflowing desire, the something had finally realized what it had possessed.

A dragon. One of the strongest beings in this world.

That which was called a "Devil" among humans—the something—was only on the bottom of its race's food chain. It did not know what kind of creature a dragon was.

If it waited a bit more. If it had a bit more knowledge and power.

It would have never, ever, possessed a dragon.

The desires of a dragon were just too strong. To the point of devouring the devourer.

As it consumed the desire called "hunger," as its very self was fading, the more it wanted to scream, the more it understood.

Yet, its understanding was much too late. It had already lost most of its consciousness.

The enormous hunger residing within the flying dragon would not disappear along with the devil.

To be exact, the devil was still residing within the dragon. Before, the devil was controlling the dragon's consciousness, but now, it lost that control.

In other words, it was like a person driving at full speeds along a highway, but that person lost consciousness for some reason. Since nobody was driving the car, the car would continue to drive at high speeds and cause an accident.

A normal flying dragon had its own instincts and intelligence, so it wouldn't recklessly put itself into danger or stray from its territory.

But, this flying dragon was different. It was now like a car with a drunk driver—except the drunk driver wasn't drunk at all and was a serial killer who relished in the feeling of crashing into people.

The crazed dragon's eyes shined with an ominous red light, and it went to search for something that could satisfy its hunger.

And in its eyes reflected a new meal. This new meal being the nest of a certain species. While the species wasn't very large, they were very grouped up, almost as if they were meant to be eaten.

Hunger in its eyes, it attacked the nest. Yet, despite ravishing each and every creature in the nest, it barely took any time at all.

The nest of the creatures it ate. In the creatures' native language, that nest was called a "village."

Chapter 75 – Slicing Magic

Several days later, Tatsumi was in Giuseppe's office like usual.

Today was one of the days that Giuseppe would teach Tatsumi magic, and while he was here, Tatsumi would ask about the cut-in-half jo.

Of course, the part about Calcedonia's clothing being ripped off was the couple's little secret.

While hearing the chain of events from Tatsumi, the old man fixedly stared at the broken jo in his hands.

"Hmmm, this is...very beautifully cut apart."

The sliced edge of the jo shined like a polished gemstone. At least, a normal cross-section of a tree wouldn't look like this.

Giuseppe's eyes shined as if he was a child given a new toy.

"Also, Calsey thinks that this was caused by my magic...but, can the Heaven system really do this kind of thing?"

"That's right...yes, just wait for a bit."

Giuseppe stroked his long beard gone white with his age. He was facing the large bookshelf in his office, thinking about something.

Then, he pulled a book from one of the shelves, and flipped through the contents. Soon enough, he returned to Tatsumi with the book in hand.

"This, it's this. According to this book, the weapon of Thiet Zamui, the original Heaven system mage, could cut through trees, boulders, and whatever else stood in his way."

This book was probably one of the books Giuseppe collected back when he was interested in the Heaven system.

"Is the information trustworthy?"

"That's unknown. This book was written a while after Thiet's death, and many

facts get distorted over time. However, Thiet's main weapon still exists."

"Huh, really? Is it here?"

"Nope, it's unfortunately not here. The weapon is held by the Church of the Sun God Golaiva."

The Grand Mage Thiet Zamui was alive around five centuries past. Even in modern Japan, many things from the past are still around, so it wasn't surprising that the Grand Mage's weapon still existed.

Furthermore, magic exists in this world. If magic is used, whether it be five centuries or a millenia, it's unmistakably possible to preserve it.

"After Thiet Zamui's death, nobody could use the weapon. Since Golaiva is also the God of War, it was offered to Golaiva's Church. Though, since you also have the Heaven system, maybe you could also use the weapon."

Giuseppe laughed happily, and Tatsumi's interest in the weapon the Grand Mage left behind flared.

It was a weapon from myths. Tatsumi didn't think that he could wield it, but he at least wanted to see it once.

"Now, back to the matter at hand. Is slicing possible with the Heaven system, was it?" Giuseppe once again began to talk.

Other than the book that Tatsumi just saw, there was another story about the Grand Mage cutting things.

And from that, Giuseppe believed that the Grand Mage had some sort of slicing power.

"To begin with, the weapon we just talked about isn't a weapon that normally cuts. He must have had a magic that gave him the ability to slice."

"What? The Grand Mage's weapon isn't a sword?"

The legendary weapon was also known as Trueslash, so Tatsumi had assumed that it was a sword, or at least a weapon with a blade.

However, from what Giuseppe just said, the weapon in question didn't seem to be a bladed one.

"Yep, it isn't a sword. On the contrary, people who don't know any better wouldn't think it was even a weapon. I suppose that it'll be faster to show you than to give a long explanation. And the Partiarch of the Church of Golaiva, Bugarank, wants to see you, so he'll definitely let us see the weapon!"

Giuseppe laughed happily, the same as ever.

After leaving Giuseppe's office, Tatsumi was walking in the Church of Savaiv.

He was going to the templar's training area to train with the other templars.

While on his way, a few junior priests doing chores came into his sight.

They were lugging a large amount of firewood somewhere.

Tatsumi looked at the junior priests with nostalgia.

As he was a full-fledged priest and a templar to top it off, he naturally wouldn't be doing these chores anymore.

But, when he had just came to this church–no, when he had just came to this world, he spent a lot of time doing menial tasks like the junior priests in front of him.

"How are you doing, Bogart? I haven't seen you since I stopped being a junior priest."

Bogart's role is to manage the other junior priests. Before he was promoted, he used to always meet with Bogart, but he hasn't anymore.

It was impossible because of work currently, but he could catch up with Bogart next time there was an opportunity. Thinking that, Tatsumi continued walking.

Once again, his footsteps stopped.

"...Now that I think about it..."

Tatsumi remembered the time when he was a junior priest.

It was when Tatsumi was first made to chop the firewood.

It was, of course, his first time cutting firewood, but the wood was cut too quickly and too easily.

At that time, he thought it was the power he got from transmigrating, so he started to seriously train as a templar. And, after he got the sealing bracelet from Giuseppe, it became much harder to do the wood.

At the time, he didn't think there was anything wrong with it, but now it was obviously strange.

The Heaven system of magic was specialized in movement; it represented the vastness of the heavens that only a Heaven-system user could easily travel across. Nonetheless, he easily cut apart the firewood without any troubles.

“...Could it be...?”

The slicing magic of the Heaven system. Maybe Tatsumi has had this power from the start.

Giuseppe was in his office after his lesson with Tatsumi was over.

Naturally, the patriarch of a major religion was a busy man. Being the mediator over internal conflicts, replying to requests from minor churches, and talks with influential believers that even the church can't ignore.

In these busy days, the lessons with Tatsumi were a much-needed breather for him.

In the lesson, they talk casually. Stories from both their worlds entertained them both.

Moreover, Tatsumi was positive, and a good student. He learned well, and his talent sometimes even surprised Giuseppe.

“My son-in-law can really entertain me.”

Slouching in his office chair, Giuseppe thought of the previous exchange between him and his favorite disciple.

“The slicing magic of the Heaven system...I can't help but be excited over if he can really master it.”

Many stories of the previous Heaven mage have been left behind.

However, those stories are dramatized, and are more exaggeration than real.

A story must be interesting to be a story, after all.

Still, Giuseppe had always thought that there was some type of slicing magic in the Heaven system, and Tatsumi could be his proof.

His excitement for Tatsumi was completely understandable.

As his teacher and his relative, Giuseppe awaited Tatsumi's growth.

However, the patriarch's secret fun came to an abrupt halt.

The royal palace had called for an emergency meeting of the four church leaders.

And in that meeting, the king and all who held major power within the nation discussed one thing.

A giant dragon was approaching the Kingdom of Largofiel.

Chapter 76 – A Dragon Approaching

A certain room of the royal palace.

In this room, there was nothing but a large table, many chairs, and a stone wall void of any decor.

Even though the room was inside the palace, it was only used for war councils. All useless and distracting decorations were depensed of in the construction of the room.

The people of authority in the Largofiel Kingdom were now gathered in such a bleak area.

The King, Berlaed Rezo Largofiel; the commander-in-chief; and the cabinet ministers were all present. Even Tatsumi and Taülorde Chrysophrase, Calcedonia's brother, were there.

Of course, the four leaders of the great churches were included. Bugarak Ishukan of the Church of Golaiva, Grugnard Armart of the Church of Dalagarvae, Mayalina Kisscalt of the Church of Glavavy, and Giuseppe Chrysoprase of the Church of Savaiv.

These powerful people all had seriousness written on their faces.

“——Earlier today, a messenger bird brought us an emergency message.”

Hearing the words of the leader that just spoke, each person in the audience grew tense, their breath growing heavier.

“...It's only in the border regions, but two villages have already fell...”

“The discovery of the situation was delayed because everyone in the villages were eaten.”

“Sorry for the rough words, but we should focus on what to do now instead of what happened in the past.”

At the nods of everyone present, the topic switched to how to deal with this situation.

This situation.

Yes. According to the lord that owned the two villages, the village-eating monster—the giant dragon—was heading towards the royal capital.

“...A dragon is hard to deal with.”

King Berlaed, seated at the head of the table, sighed deeply while crossing his arms.

“Our enemy is a dragon, but above all, it can fly. That greatly limits our options in dealing with the menace.”

Mayalina Kisscalt, Matriarch of the Moon God’s Church, replied to the king’s words. Everyone nodded in agreement.

A flying opponent cannot be hit by a sword or a spear. Arrows and magic have that range, but a normal arrow won’t penetrate a dragon’s scales, and it’s hard to hit a fast dragon with magic.

“Sir, currently, there are ten-odd giant crossbows perched on Levantes’ outer walls... However, they’re hard to handle, and are unlikely to hit the dragon. Although they will do a lot of damage if it does hit,” Taülorde added.

Giant crossbows need an entire team of soldiers to operate.

Despite its immense power, it was hard to handle like Taülorde said. It wouldn’t matter if they were shooting at large armies or castles, but hitting an agile flying dragon was a different matter altogether.

“Can’t we just ground the dragon?”

“We wouldn’t be talking here if that was possible.”

Bugarak Ishukan, Patriarch of the Sun God’s Church, rebuked Grugnard Armart, Patriarch of the Sea God’s Church.

Several more people presented their ideas, but none of them were decisive.

Nevertheless, there were some people here that would call out the others for that indecisiveness.

King Berlaed was silently watching those people.

No, he was watching the single person he trusted out of all the kingdom’s authorities.

That one person that he was watching opened his mouth.

"Hey, Berlaed. You've been staring at more for a while now... You're not thinking of something evil, are you?"

The person to question the king was none other than Giuseppe.

At Giuseppe's words, all the bickering people fell quiet and turned their attention to the king and the Harvest God's Patriarch.

It was then when King Berlaed told Giuseppe what he'd been thinking all this time.

"Giuseppe. Is it possible for your favorite disciple... the Heaven system user to deal with the dragon?"

"Why does my husband have to face the brunt of the dragon's attack!?"

In the patriarch's office of the Church of Savaiv, an angry voice resounded.

To almost yell at the person whose influence matched that of a king, it'd have to be Calcedonia.

With her eyes burning with the flames of anger, this Calcedonia was completely different than the normal "Holy Maiden" Calcedonia.

"Calm down. You seem to always go overboard when it comes to your husband."

Bitterly smiling at his raging granddaughter, Giuseppe gave her forehead a flick.

"Ah!?"

She cutely shrieked in surprise and guarded her forehead with her hands while backing up in reflex.

"I also don't want to send my son-in-law to fight the dragon. However, there aren't any other people capable of doing it."

Saying that, he turned his attention to Tatsumi once again.

"Of course, we're not forcing you. But, you'll have the full force of the kingdom's armies and the four great churches helping you. There'll also be a reward from the king if you succeed."

He didn't change from his normal tone of voice, but his facial expression showed complete seriousness. Tatsumi knew that Giuseppe wasn't joking.

Tatsumi replied, "I understand. However, why would the king choose me? Furthermore, didn't you say that dragons hardly ever attack human villages?"

Tatsumi wasn't the strongest person in the world; there were others who were better than him. It might not be a lot, but the experienced mages and beast-hunters would easily trump him in dragon-killing prowess.

Also, Giuseppe had earlier taught that dragons lived in deep forests and high mountains far from human habitation. And, dragons rarely leave their territory, so they don't usually come near humans."

"About that... According to the report, the dragon's eyes were glowing red."

The report of the destruction of the two villages came from a messenger bird from the lord who owned the said villages.

A messenger bird is like a carrier pigeon. In this world, pigeons aren't used to convey messages. Instead, a faster bird called the "pialy" was employed to send urgent mail. It looked like a falcon, except smaller.

It was first discovered when a peddler who stumbled upon a village with all its inhabitants and livestock completely gone when making his yearly rounds.

After the lord heard of this, he sent soldiers to investigate, and discovered that a large number of demonic beasts and wild animals were killed in the forests around the area.

Everything was completely eaten, without even the bones remaining. The only reason that the eatings were discovered was the absence of animals.

The soldiers later found another village in ruins and witnessed the giant dragon flying quickly away.

The lord immediately sent a messenger bird to the royal capital when he heard that. He also included that the dragon was heading towards the capital and its eyes were dyed a deep crimson.

"Glowing red eyes, you say... that is..."

"Yep. It's probably possessed by a devil."

"B-But, you said that devils do not approach villages either?"

"I did, and it's true. Our most likely theory is that the dragon was possessed by the devil, but there was a turn-around."

Giuseppe had told Tatsumi that if the possessed creature is too strong and the devil is too weak, it's possible for the devil to lose control.

In those situations, the possessed creature loses conscious thought and only follows its desire.

It seemed that the nation's leaders believe that was the case here.

"...I understand why the dragon is coming here. However, are there no other mages that can use flight magic?"

"There's a magic called 'flight' that lets you fly in the sky in the Wind system, but it's not very fast. And without being able to match the dragon's speed, they'll just end up being eaten."

Among the six beastmen races, the Cait Sith have the ability to walk in the air, but it was only to the limits of walking and running. They can't even get close to a dragon's speeds.

In the first place, the Cait Sith are a species that's much better at escaping than fighting, so they couldn't battle the dragon even if they could fly at its speed.

"We were thinking for you to teleport to the dragon and use Mana Strike then teleport back out. Rinse and repeat."

They'd also bring Calcedonia and some other healers to assist Tatsumi.

"Like I said before, you won't have to do it all alone. The kingdom's army, each church's exorcists, the templars, and this city's beast-hunters have all been requested to help. We're in the middle of preparing to attack the dragon. But, there's the problem of the dragon being in the sky."

As it would be expected, the dragon having wings was the greatest problem. There wouldn't be such troubles if it was a land dragon.

Currently, Tatsumi was the only one who could approach the dragon.

"Husband..."

Calcedonia, having heard the talks between Tatsumi and Giuseppe, called out to him with worry in her heart.

"...Has husband...already...decided on what to do?"

She knew. She knew what her husband would decide to do in these situations. And this quality in him was one of the things that attracted her.

Even if they had no connection from her previous life, she'd still fall in love without a doubt.

"Yeah. I'll do it. I don't know how far I can get, fighting against something like a dragon... Still, I'll do it. In the first place, this city will be destroyed if I don't. That's why I have to protect this place...I have to protect our home."

He laughed.

Yes. The city of Levantes was already extremely precious to Tatsumi. And, the precious friends he'd made since he came to this world also lived in this city.

His fellow templars, Verse and Neez. His party members, Eru, Jadokh, and Miloulle. His neighbors and everyone he's met. They all called Levantes their home.

And above all, in this city was the person he treasured the most.

There was no reason for Tatsumi to decline in protecting this city.

"So...help me. Give me your hand. Together...we will kill the dragon."

"Yes! Of course! If Husband is going to fight the dragon, I will fight it with you!"

They shared a smile.

To protect each other no matter what difficulties they may face, and to surmount them. Those feelings could be felt even from a third party.

Giuseppe was, of course, happily watching the two.

As both their family member and a leader in the church of the marriage god, seeing them like this was not something he didn't like.

But, it had to wait for later. The menace was drawing near.

“Fortunately, the dragon’s being delayed by all the animals that it’s eating along the way according to the scouts.”

As soon as the king received the message, he sent out people to investigate.

And a branch of those scouts sent discovered the dragon on its approach to the capital.

“We have a few more days before the dragon arrives. I’ll be making a more concrete plan. Say, Tatsumi”

“What is it?”

“There’s a person called Jaydo in your party who’s pretty strong, right?”

“Do you mean Jadokh?”

“Yeah, that sounds about right. Can you get him to come?”

“That’s possible, but...”

Tatsumi tilted his head, confused. Next to him, Calcedonia was doing the same thing.

Couples that have been together for a number of years tend to have similar gestures when reacting to something. Perhaps it already applied to the two of them.

“I have a few demon sealing tools that most people can’t use. But, Jaydo, with his good physical strength, could be able to use some of them.”

Tatsumi knew that Giuseppe had a hobby of collecting demon sealing tools. There was probably at least something that could help in fighting the dragon.

“I understand. I will ask Jadokh as soon as I am able to.”

Giuseppe called out to Tatsumi just when he was about to leave the room.

“Hey, wait. Calsey can go get Jadokh. While she does that, there’s something I need to show you.”

“Something you need to...show me?”

“That’s right. Let’s go the the Church of Golaiva.”